

Application No. 09/730,144
Amendment dated May 12, 2005
Reply to Office Action of April 19, 2005

REMARKS

Pursuant to the above-noted Office Action, claims 1-14 stand allowed, and claims 15-17, 21, 22, 25, 27, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) given Brown et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,115,641) and O'Neil et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,987,440) in view of Mehring et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,609,115). Also, claims 18-20 and 26 are objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but are otherwise allowable.

The applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough review of the application and the finding of allowable subject matter in these claims. The applicants have cancelled claims 15 through 17 and incorporated the limitations of these claims in objected to claim 18, which has been rewritten into independent form. The applicants have also rewritten objected to claim 26, incorporating the limitations of claims 15, 21, and 25, and presented the rewritten claim as new independent claim 29 with corresponding dependent claims 30-37.

There being no other rejections of or objections to the claims, the applicant respectfully requests that claims 18-37 be passed to allowance in addition to previously allowed claim 1-14.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in this application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17 during its entire pendency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1135. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1135.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____

Steven G. Parmelee
Registration No. 28,790

Date: May 12, 2005

FITCH, EVEN, TABIN & FLANNERY
Suite 1600
120 South LaSalle
Chicago, Illinois 60603-3406
Telephone: (312) 577-7000
Facsimile: (312) 577-7007